



News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Joe DiLaura 317/232-3396

Josh Richardson 317/233-0998

Major Opportunities training underway in Gary, Indianapolis and South Bend

INDIANAPOLIS (December 20, 2006) -- Training is now underway in Gary, South Bend and Indianapolis, with classes scheduled to begin in Fort Wayne and Evansville early next year for the Major Opportunities pre-apprenticeship training program, officials announced today.

The initial classes mark the beginning of a six-year state training effort geared toward providing minority workers with the skills to succeed in the building and construction trades and for future employment in projects created by Governor Daniels' Major Moves roads program and by Indiana's surge of new economic development.

In October, the state announced the organizations it selected to provide the training in the five cities and began enrolling students for the classes. The Indiana General Assembly has appropriated up to \$12 million over the next six years for the program. The state hopes to train 640 students in the first year of the program.

In Indianapolis, the Associated Builders & Contractors has just started its second class of students and in Gary, Ivy Tech Community College began its first class last week. Classes offered by the Indiana Plan have also just begun in Indianapolis, South Bend and Gary. Classes are scheduled to begin early next year in Fort Wayne and Evansville.

"As we have said time and time again, there will soon be thousands of new construction jobs, not only as a result of Major Moves, but as a result of other economic development projects announced recently," said Governor Daniels. "The Major Opportunities program is designed to ensure that members of the minority community have access to these new jobs by providing them with the skills necessary for success in the building trades."

"We are very encouraged by the interest in this program, and want to thank the training providers for their efforts in getting this training opportunity underway," said Andrew Penca, commissioner of the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

The training providers offering the program are:

South Bend

Ivy Tech Community College
Indiana Plan

Gary

Ivy Tech Community College
Indiana Plan

Indianapolis

Associated Builders & Contractors
Ivy Tech Community College
Indiana Plan
AZTEC

Fort Wayne
Ivy Tech Community College

Evansville
Ivy Tech Community College

The legislation creating the program was enacted by the 2006 Indiana General Assembly at the behest of State Senators Earline Rogers (D-Gary) and Glenn Howard (D-Indianapolis). “I am pleased to see this program is off to a good, strong start,” Senator Rogers said. “It’s a wonderful opportunity for more people to gain an important set of skills and to become involved in the building trades industry. I look forward to its continued growth as more and more people take advantage of this opportunity,” she said.

As of mid-December, more than 1,000 individuals have completed the WorkKeys assessments, which are required as a first step in qualifying for the program. After an individual completes the WorkKeys assessment, the results are provided to the training providers who use this information to help select the participants. As the program is scheduled to run at least six years, enrollment remains open for the program in all five cities. Persons interested in applying for the program should contact the WorkOne Employment center at these locations:

Indianapolis
WorkOne East
2525 North Shadeland Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46219-1770
317-358-4500

Gary
Gary WorkOne office
1776 West 37th Ave
Gary, IN 46408
219-981-1520 ext. 340

South Bend
WorkOne office
851 South Marietta Street
South Bend, IN 46601
1-866-383-WORK (9675)

Fort Wayne
Fort Wayne WorkOne office
201 East Rudisill Blvd. Suite 202
Fort Wayne, IN 46806
(260)745-3555, ext. 364

Evansville
Evansville WorkOne office
700 East Walnut St
Evansville, 47713
812-424-4473 ext 245